

# Filipino Language Teachers: Skills and Challenges Encountered in the Industry

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**Abstract**— In the world of education, teachers play a vital role in educating the students. They must be fully equipped with different teaching strategies and skills that will prepare them in facing challenges that they may encounter in the different industries. In connection with it, the researchers decided to conduct this study which aims to gather and analyze the skills and challenges encountered by the Filipino Language Teachers in the industry. It answers the following queries on (1) what are the skills that the Filipino Language Teachers possess? (2) What are the challenges that they encountered in the industry? The descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. Based on the data presented, the Filipino language teachers are sociable and communicative, can generate new ideas; can solve problems and critical thinkers. They also experienced different challenges in the industry. Therefore, there is need for curriculum restructuring and conducting of seminars and workshops for them to develop and enhance more their skills.

**Keywords**— Filipino language teachers, skills, challenges, curriculum restructuring.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Educating the students is one of the main roles of the teachers. Teaching is fun and challenging especially if different strategies are applied and proven effective. As an educator, the real world if teaching is not easy. Challenges come along and different scenarios and expectations are always there.

According to Sanchez and Diamante (2017), there is a transition phase in the careers especially for the new graduates and the rapid changing nature of the work challenges these graduates. These emphasize that being in the industry whether new graduates or not, faces different challenges. The challenges may be existed a long time ago or it could be a new one that was curriculum related.

Schomburg (2016) stated that there is a rapid changed in jobs and individuals changes their skills with the help of education, training and work experiences. These emphasizes that even if the teachers finished the degree, there is still a need for improvement and to update their skills. These skills needs to fit and should be based on the needs of the industry.

It is also observed that teacher's faces different challenges almost every day and they make used of the skills that they already possess and sometimes they acquired new skills because of the need in the industry. These observations lead the researchers who are Filipino language teachers also, in conducting a study in relation to the skills and challenges that the Filipino language teachers face.

This study aims to gather and analyze the skills and challenges encountered by the Filipino Language Teachers in the industry.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to gather and analyze the skills and challenges encountered by the Filipino Language Teachers in the industry.

Specifically, answers to the following queries will be sought:

- (1) what are the skills that the Filipino Language Teachers possess?
- (2) What are the challenges that they encountered in the industry?

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the most important roles of the teachers is to educate and facilitate the students learning. Every day in their life, they encounter different challenges. According to Coehlo (2000) in his novel *The Devil and Miss Prym*, he stated that life gives us challenges when we least expect it. This is to test our courage and willingness and because challenges come unexpectedly, there will be no chance of pretending or denying that we are not ready.

The statement mentioned, is related to the study conducted since it emphasize the challenges that most teachers faces in the industry. Once they are already in the field and a certain challenges come, they have no choice but to solve and do something about it with the used of the skills that they have.

As stated by Sherrington (2019), there are seven significant and common challenges in teaching. One is persistent learning blocks. It means that no matter how hard the teacher tries to explain the students still don't understand. Second is diverging attainment. This means that some students understand and some needs further explanations and discussions. Every student has a different learning style and ability. This could be an advantage sometimes but in some cases this is also a challenge for the teachers to make it synchronize. The third challenge is the lack of time to do the practice for a certain activity or skills. There's not much time for practice because there are certain target and objectives that needs to be accomplished at the end of each school year. Fourth challenge is the teachers don't have enough time to check on every student. This is really challenging especially for those teachers who handle a huge class size. In the Philippine setting, a teacher can have thirty (30) to fifty (50) or more students and each student we're evaluated and undergo assessment. Therefore, the result and feedbacks must be given as soon as possible for the students to consider the things that need improvement. The fifth challenge is the curriculum. There are so many skills that the students' needs to understand and

master but coverage of the curriculum is full of coverage. The sixth is managing a productive talk. Interaction in the class is one of the best ways for the students to be engaged but handling it as a teacher is a challenge. Since some of the students love to talk, if a teacher allows them to share their ideas, some of the students may interrupt and as a teacher, he or she must handle it. The last challenge presented is letting them do the task. Some of the students may find it interesting to do a task given by the teacher but some may find it boring and tiring.

The stated challenges that teachers encounter may be addressed in different strategies but it may not be applicable to some scenarios. As an educator, the teacher knows her or his students. Hence, the approach for the challenges encountered may vary depending on the student's nature.

According to Orillaza (2010), there is unemployment because of a remarkable mismatch of skills and demands. It is clearly stated that the applicants' skills and the demands of the employers do not match. In the field of teaching, teachers are expected to multitask. The skills that they possess are frequently used but most of the time they are not prepared for any worst scenarios especially if they are assigned in remote areas. With these, challenges occur and the teachers are forced to just make use of any resources that they have even if actually there's none.

It is also stated by Daily (2017) that a graduate in general does not possess the skills expected from them on the hiring point. At some point, in the case of the teachers, they make use of the skills that they already possess and develop or acquire new skills in the field. The demands and the challenges in the real world of education, taught the teachers to be resourceful and be creative and imaginative.

Teaching indeed is a self-sacrificing profession. Every day, teachers encounter varieties of challenges from curriculum to the real classroom set-up. Without a doubt, institutions offering education programs make sure that the students and graduates are prepared once they are in the field.

As stated by Boholano (2014), qtd Mayol (2014), in their university, the students are trained not just in academics but also they try to mold their characters. At some point, these character-building institutions prepared the students in dealing with real work situations. This emphasizes that in an institution, it is not just all about academic because character matters.

The mentioned literatures highlighted the importance of skills and the challenges in general. As an educator, both skills and challenges exist and they encounter it almost every day. This reality led the researchers to go into these topics and analyze the data gathered. Not all hardships and struggles of the teachers are visible but it can be observed and felt by the people in the academe.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive analysis to analyze the data gathered. The researchers chose the Filipino language teachers who are graduates of Cebu Normal University since 2010 to 2015 because the mentioned institution has a College of Teacher Education which is considered as Center of Excellence in Teacher Education and Center of Training for Department of Education Programs and Trainings for 15 years with

coordination of Commission of Higher Education. The researchers asked for the list of graduates of Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Filipino from 2010 to 2015 from the university registrar. Based on the list, we searched the names in the list and found out that majority of them are affiliated in Department of Education. A letter was sent to the supervisor of the department to ask permission to conduct the study and have the teachers as the respondents. Once approved, the researchers created a Facebook group and added the Facebook accounts. From there, the questionnaire was given and posted and in some cases, the researchers personally visit the respondents in their affiliated school in case they don't have internet connection. After gathering the data, interpretation and analysis were done.

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers are competent and these characteristics drive them to do more and be resourceful as much as possible. Many of them learned to make use of what is available and to stop looking for what is not there. Based on the data gathered, it is observed that Filipino language teachers are sociable and communicative, can generate new ideas; can solve problems and critical thinkers. These skills enable them to survive in the field of teaching despite of the challenges that they encounter. Those being sociable and communicative are a big advantage since they can express and share their struggles and achievements to others. Others also share their sentiments and experiences and some way they are also the one who help hand in hand. It is also observed that Filipino language teachers can generate new ideas, can solve problems and critical thinkers. This skill may exist before they became teachers and then enhanced because of the needs in the industry. Many of the Filipino language teachers are flexible in some ways and some of them are driven because of the determination to serve and educate the students.

According to Leffler (2015), the more mind involved in a particular scenario, the better. It is because people have people backgrounds and different cultures. This difference enables them to solve problems in different approaches. Exposure to these approaches teaches the teachers to choose which one is applicable in the industry that they belong. Because of these, new ideas and skills are acquired.

Agreeing to the statement mentioned, Kehere (2007) said that to have a better understanding, intelligence, decision making and skill, one must increase their knowledge in a particular field or subjects. This emphasizes that being knowledgeable in some areas equipped the teachers to understand and develop skills that can be used in different areas in life and work.

Despite of the skills possessed by Filipino language teachers, it is observed that they still need improvement in terms of pedagogy and research. It is understandable that because they are bombarded with paperwork they don't have much time in conducting or doing research and learning other teaching strategies. They are knowledgeable about research and pedagogy but they don't have enough time to practice the skills.

As part of the daily work life of the Filipino language teachers, they encounter different challenges. Table 1 below shows the data gathered. It is in verbatim and clustered.

TABLE 1. Challenges Encountered by the Filipino language teachers in the Industry

Theme	Statements in Verbatim
Skills of the Students	*Hindi nagagamit ng maayos sa pangungusap ang mga salita. *...hindi marunong magbaybay ng ilang mga salita at nahihirapan sa pagbuo ng pangungusap na may wastong gramatika ang ilang mga learner's material ay may mga hindi tukmang mga aralin sa competency. *Walang magandang kasanayan ang estudyante sa pagsasalita at pagbuo ng mga pangungusap sa wikang Filipino.
Difficulty in using Filipino language because of the influence of English	*Pagkakaroon ng mga estudyanteng Ingles ang <i>1st language</i> *Mas maalam ang mga mag-aaral sa wikang Ingles.
Strategies and techniques in teaching	*Ang mga hamon na aking naranasan bilang guro sa Filipino ay ang paggamit ng iba't ibang estratehiya at teknik sa pagtuturo nito.
Learning Materials	*Kakulangan ng modyul *Hindi tumutugmang <i>Curriculum Guide, Teaching Guide, Competencies</i> *Kakulangan ng kagamitan sa pagtuturo *Walang aklat ang mga mag-aaral sa unang taon
Lack of interest in learning the subject	*Pagkakaroon ng mga estudyante na nababagot sa Filipino *...ang interes ng mga estudyante sa kurso. *Ang hamon na magustuhan at manatili ang interes ng mag-aaral na pag-aralan ang Filipino.
Big class size	*Congested sa populasyon ng mga mag-aaral *Bilang ng mga mag-aaral sa loob ng isang klasrum
Students' attitude and behavior	*Pag-unawa sa ugali ng kabataan sa kasalukuyan *Pagkakahumaling ng mga mag-aaral sa <i>gadgets</i> o sa mga <i>computer games</i> .
Additional positions and functions	*Hamon talaga ng isang guro sa Filipino ang maging isang <i>school paper adviser</i> sa Filipino. *Sobrang daming <i>paperworks</i> na kung minsan ay wala namang silbi at kung minsan mas naka-focus na ang guro sa <i>paperworks</i> kaysa sa pagtuturo sa loob ng klase dahil sa mga <i>deadlines</i>
Lack of support from the administration	*Kakulangan ng pasilidad sa paaralan *...sa lugar ay walang <i>internet</i> at <i>signal</i>
Discrimination	*Nariyan ang diskriminasyon, ang pananaw ng mga nasa akademya ng pagiging <i>baduy</i> at mababa ng disiplina dulot ng mga palaging katagang "Maglisud gyud ko ug tinagalog", "Katulgon gyud ko basta Filipino na", "Makahinumdom gyud ko nga gipadula mi sa Florante at Laura etc."

Based on the data presented, there are ten (10) themes of challenges encountered by the Filipino language teachers in the industry. These challenges motivate the teachers to do something since they are the one handling the students and it is their roles to help them learn on the subject. It also shows that challenges are not easy to handle especially for the teachers that have several functions.

According to Sharma (2017), enhancing the communication skills can help the learners to handle professional and social tensions. This statement supports the idea that Filipino language teachers are doing their part in educating the students to learn

and enhanced their communication skills even if some of them are not interested. The teachers knows that it is their job to be part of developing their skills that is the reason why it is a challenge to them if the learners are not interest in the subject and they love to learn other language instead.

Another challenge encountered by the Filipino language teachers is lack of support from the administration that lead to lack of learning materials. In some cases, teachers need to spend and used their personal money. According to Wong (2012), Filipinos are kind. Most of the Filipinos are relational people and skillful in emotionally and socially. This characteristic mostly possesses especially by teachers. They have the sense of responsibility that is why they have to spend out of their own pocket. Filipino language teachers see to it that the learners learn from them that is why they make use whatever resources they have and utilized it.

The students' behavior is also a challenge not just by their parents but theirs second parents also. Since teachers are considered the second teachers, the behavior of the learners becomes a barrier in learning. Duncan (2012) stated that, the complete generation we're born within technological age, war on terror and multiculturalism. It is observed that typically the learners now in secondary education belong to Generation Z. They are more interested in gadgets, online games, social media and many more. These becomes a challenge to language teachers especially they adapt a new way of speaking and writing a specific language and some of these students focus and spend most of their time in gadgets.

The discrimination of the language or the subject itself is a challenge to Filipino language teachers. In the Philippine setting, many Filipinos consider the language and the subject as "baduy" or cheap and should be used in movies and telenovelas only. As mentioned by Contreras (2014), there are Filipinos who considered Filipino language as language of uneducated, jologs and hoi polio which means it's not for academic. This mindset is a challenge to Filipino language teachers because they are in the academe and they have to teach the students to love and learn the language and subject that they consider non-essential.

Being a language teacher is not easy. By nature, language is dynamic and as educator knowledge and skills should grow together. The challenges encountered are also dynamic. They change the same as the generation of learners' changes. Conducting workshop and seminars for language teachers is a must for them to be updated and learn new ways to face those challenges and prepare for upcoming task.

For the institutions offering education program, a curriculum restructuring must be considered. I believed most of the universities are doing this already. This is an icebreaker for every institution since graduates real battle field is the work field. Instead of viewing it a hindrance, we must consider every obstacle as a challenge and a way to change the traditional system.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Based the data gathered and analyzed, the researcher found out that Filipino language teachers are sociable and communicative, can generate new ideas; can solve problems

and critical thinkers. They also experienced different challenges in the industry and from those challenges there is need for curriculum restructuring to fit their skills to the needs of the industry and conducting of seminars and workshops for them to develop and enhance more their skills.

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